

**PATTERNS OF BELIEF AMONG THE AMISH**

by

**Merton D. Oyler**

**Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology**

**Ohio State University**

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## PATTERNS OF BELIEF AMONG THE AMISH<sup>1</sup>

BY MERTON D. OYLER<sup>2</sup>

One of the interesting things about studying another religious community is that it causes us to examine our own religious beliefs. I am sure that you can appreciate what this does to someone who studies a group as different from their background as the Amish are from mine. I have practically no German background. I learned German to participate in the general program for a doctorate, and it is not a native tongue with me. When they first invited me to their service, they pointed out apologetically that it would be in German. I said, "Well, that's all right," and they said, "Well, how will you understand?" I said, "I'll get you to tell me afterwards in English," and they agreed.

### What are some of the social pressures that the Amish face?

I am reminded of a discussion that took place in the yard of a farm home out at Plain City on a Sunday afternoon about three weeks ago. We were gathered for a three-hour preaching service in the morning; we met in a barn on the second floor in what you would call the hayloft, and then they asked me to stay for lunch, and after the lunch was served in the house we gathered on the lawn. We were comparing notes about the repair of a chair. I said that there was a chair in our family that was broken down after several generations of use, and I needed to repair it, and they said, "That would be an antique, would it?" "I suppose some people think we are antiques," one Amish farmer commented, and I replied that in our family if we have the furniture from at least three generations, we don't call them antiques, we call them heirlooms. And I suppose you want a name for your church relationship, other than antique, and he said, "Yes." "Well, I suggest you say that you are preserving the traditions of many generations," and he said, "That's the way we feel about it." The tradition is preserved, not just as it is, but often in modified improvement.

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<sup>2</sup>Professor of Sociology and Rural Sociology, The Ohio State University.

The first pressure is to acquire worldly goods of a non-productive nature.

They see people around them with very fine barns and excellent farming equipment and wonderful houses equipped with the latest television and furniture, and the pressure is on to imitate their successful neighbors. Now it's perfectly all right to purchase any item of farm equipment, they think, as long as it is definitely demonstrated to be an efficient means of production. That means they can have the finest work horses you can get. They laugh and say, "We use broken-down race horses," because they like driving horses on the highway, and I suppose some of the breeds of their driving horses are as famous as any you know about. They want the best cattle, and there is no sparing of breed lines if they want milk cattle for production. But the line is drawn if they want worldly goods as a means of consumption, or of living comfortably. That has no place in their thinking, and if we can accept their philosophy, we can understand why more money goes into farming production items like machinery and livestock, and other items of production than goes into the household. Now that doesn't mean they apologize for their way of living. They eat well, they sleep well, they entertain well, and some of their mechanical devices for pumping water, etc., leave us in shame if we have never seen them.

A new practice in farming may be very efficient, but may be frowned upon by the church as a whole, possibly because it would emphasize material gain over and above spiritual gain. Comfort itself is not wicked; but if it is emphasized above spiritual gains, then it becomes a harm and a stumbling block. "Clothing that would be for neither warmth nor cold, but for appearance only," would be frowned upon. Refrigerators and other means of food preservation are used in many communities, but in some communities in Buchanan County, Iowa the members are more conservative and the refrigerator is not accepted.

The second pressure is to enter an occupation other than farming.

Of course their young people would like to say that they are earning well, and sometimes the land is poor, sometimes the job away from the farm is very remunerative,

and they would like to take it. Every Amishman says to his son, "farming is the favorite calling; it is blessed by God." And there is no other occupation quite like it. There is none higher, because the farmer is also bishop and minister. They have no ordained ministry separate from thier membership.

The peaceful way of life that the Amish find so satisfying in their farming occupation is grounded on their reference to Luke 3:14 where John the Baptist is quoted: "And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, and what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages."

Another pressure is to attend school taught by and for non-Amish and non-believers of the Plain people. That means every Amishman cherishes the opportunity that his child shall be taught clearly by someone who understands the Amish religion. It might be a Mennonite neighbor who has gone to college, because very few Amishmen go to college. It may mean that they need to organize their own Christian day school, as they have done in Plain City areas, as they have done in Stark County, and as they have done in a number of communities in areas adjoining Holmes County, where a large number of Amish live.

The Amish prefer that their children concentrate their school efforts on the three essentials - reading, writing and arithmetic. They hold that these are the essential skills needed as farmers and church people, and that these should be fully acquired at the completion of the eighth grade in school.

They insist that the direct occupational skills needed in farming and home-making are learned through apprentice work on the home farm and through exchange work among the neighbors. This is held by many of their church leaders to be the only way to acquire their church skills, their changes in agricultural practices and their improvements in family living patterns. These leaders hold that any attempt to instruct in these areas of life within the public school system would lead to a weakening of their church unity.

Another pressure is to marry outside the faith. On a train in 1944, I met a young man who was wearing a soldier's uniform. He said he was on the way to an Army camp in Missouri from an Induction Center in Maryland. He is married to an Amish daughter, and his father-in-law said to him, "If you will wear the cloth, you will be taken care of," implying that he would not do military service. But he said that he couldn't see that way of life, and told him so, and so he went into the Army, but he was married to an Amish daughter. Now, what does that do when they marry outside of their religion? I asked that question of the Chairman of the Christian Day School Board in the Plain City area, and he said, "We have learned of one Amish girl who was reared a Catholic. Her future husband, Old Order Amish, was interested in her, they were courting, and discussing religion, and she went to the bishop of the Amish church, and took instructions, and became a member of the Old Order Amish faith. Her mother was so impressed by her experience that the mother asked for instruction as an Old Order Amish member. Now, there are very few people converted to the Amish religion, because when you are converted to the Amish religion, you very probably will marry into the Amish family structure. Otherwise you wouldn't be needing a new religion. It's a religion of families, rather than church buildings; they don't have church buildings, they meet in the home, and naturally that would lead toward marrying into the group. At least part of the Amish community thinks and feels this way. Now that idea isn't new. It's no more recent than the Hebrew idea that you don't convert people, you simply retain your own, be fruitful and multiply, and let the rest of the world go in peace, but you rear all of your own children in the faith. Now actually, the Old Order Amish church has reared sufficient numbers of offspring in Plain City to not only maintain and build up three districts of Old Order Amish, but they have furnished the population for the Conservative Church, which now has a struggling and fairly successful, numerous, membership. They have furnished most of the members for the Mennonite Church in that community. Now, what I'm suggesting is that the pressure

is on to move from the Old Order Amish to the Conservative Church, where you buy an automobile and put a telephone in your house, and change your garb just a little bit to represent a more professional looking suit. Then, if they want to go to college, they join the Mennonite group, and go to a Mennonite college. Very seldom does an Old Order Amish child go to any school actually beyond the local public school of eight grades unless he changes his religion to one of the Mennonite group of faiths, which we would call a little less conservative.

There is a great pressure to worship things rather than spiritual values.

Now, I think we can illustrate that very plainly. I drove down the highway in Plain City community last August, and saw a fire in the district, and naturally like everyone else, I went to the fire. When I arrived, it was an Amish barn that was burning. This was a recently constructed large dairy barn equipped to have the dairy herd producing milk for the Columbus milk market. I learned that it was the son of the school board chairman. The school board chairman doesn't own the farm he operates; but he was buying this farm and had constructed the new barn for his son to take over to become a dairy farmer. The Plain City Fire Department was out there with a small rural fire engine, but the real work was being done by the Amish neighbors.

Now, you could imagine me on the sideline watching while these men with the long beards and their traditional workclothes were rushing to put out the fire. After a little while, I started toward my car up the road, thinking I would go on to Plain City. As I was going up the road, an elderly woman saw me, and she turned to me as you would to someone whom you felt you ought to recognize but don't know their name. She asked me, "Haven't I met you before?" I said, "Yes, I was at your house; we didn't meet, but I talked to your husband and son out on the porch, and you were in the house." She commented, "Oh, I recognized your voice." I remarked, "This was a very serious fire wasn't it? Quite a loss," and she replied, "I tell them it was one of those worldly things."

I am illustrating how the temptation to worship things, rather than spiritual values, is a part of their daily life. She was trying to say: "There is no human loss; we haven't lost a single person, we haven't had any serious injury to people. This is one of those worldly things. We don't worship things, we worship the spirit."

They could rebuild that barn in a few weeks time. I went back in late September. The barn was replaced and the grain and the hay were in it. Where did they get it? From the co-operation and effort of the neighbors. There was no cash insurance. It's a mutual insurance, rather than a money insurance.

There is a second way of looking at it. A man might want the newest farm implement. I talked to the son of one of the bishops who owned a tillage implement that had come from England, the Howard Rotovator. He was very proud of this implement, but he couldn't have a false pride. It must only be because it would improve his farming method. I noticed that the Rotovator was built to hook on to a Ford tractor, and I asked, "Will this outlast your tractor?" He said, "No, I think not; I was the first Amishman to own a Fordson tractor in this community. I have had it sixteen years, and I am still using it for lighter farmwork, but I've gotten this heavier one for tillage. I bought this implement to fit this tractor, and I think it will last the life of the tractor."

Then he said, "But I am a little embarrassed, because my crop this year is out along the highway, and all my Amish neighbors will be watching my newer methods of farming, and they are going to laugh at me," and I patted him on the shoulder, and said, "That's the price of being a leader, isn't it?" And he said, "Yes, it is." Now, when can a member of an intensive group introduce change? He was the son of a bishop, a very successful farmer. You've seen his picture in the Columbus Dispatch possibly, because it published a photograph of two boys with a horse; this was the father with his two boys, and he was standing in the picture. The Amish don't believe in having pictures or photographs, and I pointed this out to some of my Amish friends, and said, "Look at all these pictures of the Amish." And they

said, "Yes, but these people didn't give their consent." If you study the picture closely, you'll wonder just what the photographer said that they didn't give their consent, but part of it is in the purpose of the picture. In this instance, they were taking a picture of a horse and the men were standing beside the horse. Now sometimes we can see the inconsistencies in some other philosophy easier than we can see them in our own, and so I attempted to see the inconsistencies in this new way of life--new to me. This is very ancient to the Amish, because they are one of the Plain Peoples who developed a hard core in Europe in the sixteen hundreds during persecution by leaders of the political organizations of their day.

What are the rewards for conformity? I'll just list these briefly. First, if investments in agriculture are highly productive, every son can start as a part-owner, rather than as a farm renter, and you will recognize that that's quite an incentive. Second, if sons enter farming they will remain in the midst of the faith; they will be helped by their neighbors through fires, storms, persecutions, pestilences, etc. Third, mutual aid is always available to members of the faith, in any act of God, any emergency, sickness, or other trouble. Fourth, the family-centered worship is its own reward and inspiration. They don't have to be rewarded for worshipping. It's part of their way of life. It's as natural as the reward that comes from resting after a summer harvesting day, or it's as natural as a family reunion. And lastly, if one marries within the faith, his kin group will already have accepted the new in-laws. It's just a part of the family system. One never gets married in the Amish faith unless the in-laws already know the new relatives well, and accept them into the kin group.

How are the young folks kept in the fold? First, by providing them an assured occupation and way of life. Apprentice farming is always ready. No one is unemployed. I don't suppose it would be possible for an Amish child to be unemployed. They wouldn't know what that word means. They give their able, young leaders a responsibility for youth activity leadership. They put them to work



as you did this morning among your group. Now, how do they put them to work? I went to a National Conference near Goshen, Indiana, and they had a Youth Day. The young man from Plain City, whom I would consider my intellectual equal, if not my superior, was the chairman of that group, and he invited me to the national meeting. He has had high school training, plus two years at Eastern Mennonite College. He reads widely, is self-taught on many subjects that he teaches in the grade school.

Another way they hold their youth is to let them move over to affiliated groups. Now let me illustrate this. If you think you are going to lose a young, obstreperous son, you give him a little more rope with the hope that he'll learn how to use it. They do the same thing, and they don't take pride in this, but if the son isn't willing to follow the Old Order tradition, he becomes a member of the Conservative congregation, who are right down the road, and they have their own church building. He doesn't meet in the home of his ancestors, he meets in the church building, and drives a car to that church. That's all right for a Conservative, but it isn't all right for Old Order Amish. Then if he wants to go to college, he fellowships in the Mennonite community. He hasn't been lost to the Plain people, but he has become a member of the fellowship of professionally trained people. And so the Mennonites furnish the principals of their school, they furnish their highly skilled technicians, and they operate the World Relief Organization for the Amish--I'll come to that in a minute.

What are their courting procedures? First, there are the church meetings in the local district. There's a lot of courting in the barn and the yard, and the fellowship of the Sunday meetings, because they make no sharp line between going to church and going to a neighbor's house--that's all part of Sunday work. And in this process they meet every eligible person in their district, meet them on friendly terms, and they don't run off after church. They are there all afternoon, and only those who have to take care of some farm animal would think of leaving the Amish family gathering on Sunday afternoon. I stayed till four o'clock. I had a

girl with me from Germany, and I turned to her and said, "I didn't promise to let you stay all day." The Amish had a good laugh over that, and they let us part in peace. Second, there are the visits to relatives in other communities. There is a network across the United States, and all you have to do if you aren't related to this Amishman in Pennsylvania or North Dakota or California or Florida, is to tell them to whom they are related that you are related to. So they went a step further than you did, when introducing me this morning, Dr. Capener. That means they are always introduced to every Amish family in the United States, and there are no Amish families in Europe today. Why? Because, as one of the Amish students points out, "The kind of farm ownership in Europe today has made it more attractive for all of the Amish Mennonites to move to the United States, Canada, South America, or some continent other than Europe. There are no native Amish left in Europe, and that is their native home. It's like there were no Jews in Jerusalem at one time.

Third, there is the National Conference, not only this kinship with relatives. They take a great pride in showing, "I was born in Virginia, I married a girl in Plain City, I am now farming in Indiana." That's the typical pattern. But there is the National Conference, which has come within the lifetime of the present farmers, and it is a very recent organization. It met in 1956 and all Amish were invited to this meeting. Until they had this ~~national~~ meeting, they weren't emphasizing missions, now they are emphasizing missions, and they get the Mennonites, who have long had a Central Missionary Committee, to tell them how to run this Mission project, because it is something new to these farm families. When they meet in a National Conference (I noticed this in the Conservative Church first, which I attended at Apple Creek in Wayne County, near Wooster, but they did the same thing over in Goshen among the Old Order Amish who drive buggies) they set aside one night during the three-day conference as a Youth Night, not only Youth Day, but they had a Youth Night. Then two or three Bishops take the responsibility for the

young people to have their own evening, and the old folks clear out and they have this gathering. The young folks have sort of been milling around each other all the week, and that's the real night that they begin testing whether they want to get better acquainted with a given girl or with a given boy. And it's that type of national experience which lets them seek friendships on a national basis, these farm families. And last, there are the family reunions. I met Mr. Eli Miller just after he'd got back from a winter in Florida. How did he support himself in Florida? Well, he worked as a helper in a box factory for the vegetable industry. His neighbor drove the John Deere tractor for one of the leading attorneys in Florida, who wanted farm help for the winter. So they supported themselves while they were in Florida. They were in a community which has a church large enough for six hundred people to gather at one time, and they are generally preached to by someone of the Mennonite ministers, who is college trained and travels over the United States to talk to these different conferences. Now Eli Miller said just after he got back from Florida, "My wife wants me to take her out to Kansas for her family reunion," and when I went back to Plain City two weeks later, they were in Kansas. Now she's the daughter of a Bishop out at Plain City, the Bishop was born in Ohio, near Wooster. He migrated out to Kansas, back to Plain City, out to Kansas, and back to Plain City, as a farmer, not as a preacher. In that process this family has roots in both Kansas and Plain City. So they were holding a reunion out in Kansas, and Eli Miller was out there, and the Chairman of the School Board near Plain City was there with his wife, whose sister is Eli Miller's wife, and all of those are sons and daughters of the Bishop. So you can see how these kinships operate in mate selection. They meet some young person who is just tangentially related to their family who would make a good match for their grandson, and they get things started on visits. They never do courting as such, they just go for a visit. Now there was a time when courtship practices were very blunt. I'll give the bluntest one I've heard yet. A man was recorded as leaving his community up

near Wooster. He was going over to Pennsylvania, and they said, "How long will you be gone?" He said, "Not longer than two weeks." "Well, what's his trip?" "Oh, he's going to get a wife." "Well, how will he be gone for two weeks? He won't get to know her in that time." "It doesn't take long to find a girl of sound mind and body who will make a good farm wife, and they can find that out by asking about her." Now you see with a kinship group this works pretty smoothly, because you don't have to have professional references.

What are their Communal practices? I'll just list these. The local worship and fellowship is a sharing of food. When that food is put on the table it's put on the table by the host's family. It's a bountiful table, although they only call it a lunch, and the only hot food I saw on the whole menu was coffee. But you didn't have to apologize for what they eat--they eat well. Their sharing of food is faithful worship. They don't own a church, they share their home or their barns for places of worship. There is no piano, it is always a cappella singing. You can imagine my--I won't say embarrassment--but I was on the spot. They had let me come to their worship. They had no song leader, but one man on the third row hit the note for each line. If you got that note when he hit it, then you could follow along on all the singing, which was in German, in hymn books without notes. He explained on the second song, "This we use every Sunday for our service, for our second song," and you should have heard them singing. They put as much meaning in that song as you would put in "The Lord's Prayer." That was their main worship song, but they use a repertoire of probably two hundred songs, all printed in German. And they are old classic German at that, not the modern typewriter letters, the classic German. How do they take care of the children at this service? That interested me very much. Here sits the father, with just the old men next to him, and back of them are the young men. This was a very large barn loft, and the pattern would be a little different in a house. Over here were the youngest girls

not yet married, back of them were the young women with babies, nearest the steps to the ladder which lead from the loft of the barn to the floor below. Back of them were spread out the elderly ladies, who could doze, listen to their men folk preach, or just have a reverie of their past, whatever they wished to do. The young girls with the babies made frequent trips down from the lofts, and so did the Bishop leave after he preached; this is a three-hour service. Now many of us never left our benches during those three hours, I would say that most of the congregation were on those plain benches without backs. Now they take care of the children by simply teaching these children to relax. Right beside of one of the ministers sat his son, up in front with the minister, and that son was just as quiet and unobtrusive there as you could imagine any child to be, he was about eight years of age. I looked around the room. There was no problem of discipline, if a child got restless it was for a reason, so he went outside. If a baby got restless and needed changing, the mother just simply took the baby out, changed it, and came back. This was going on all the time, but you would have to be looking very carefully to see this happening, and that's communal worship.

They have a set-up in farming that consists of something like what you might call a shower, to get all of this household equipment together for the bride and groom, which includes a lot of things which you don't need in the city, you see. Household equipment, utensils, etc. To get this all together, they have the equivalent of a shower, usually the articles are brought to the wedding. If the family doesn't have all the equipment, very likely relatives have accumulated some at the time the couple set up housekeeping. Then there's the helping hand in barn raising. Suppose this new method of farming required a barn, as this dairy farmer did. They all got together and built this barn. Now I don't suppose it is easy for us to visualize how they keep financial records in that kind of a system. All you use money for is to deal with outsiders. You don't need money to deal with insiders. For hospitalization, I talked to one Amish family who had their child in Children's Hospital for ten months with polio, and this is what the father said to me. "There

wasn't a day or a night that there wasn't an Amish adult by that child's bedside if the nurse would let them stay; but there were times the nurse asked them to step off the ward, and they were waiting out in the corridor." They had a system of rotation, and they kept the mother and father there as long as they wanted to stay, by doing the farmwork back home through the relatives. They have a system of transportation that is rather unique. An Amishman doesn't drive an automobile. Let's say a distant cousin, a Mennonite or Conservative does, so they will form a car pool to go to these national meetings. If they are going to Florida, instead of riding the train or the bus, there will be some Mennonite who will want to go and take a car load full, and they by exchange of either services or money, or some other method, finance the trip. They let me join in one going up to Goshen, Indiana, driven by a Mennonite, and when we got back we had to negotiate how much to pay him, and that's a very delicate matter. It isn't a matter of how much you can pay, or how much you can give them, but how do you reach agreement? Now they take care of emergency costs often. A man tells me that his son was driving down the highway on a tractor and wagon, and a truck came behind him and jammed them and broke both his legs, and he had to have both of them amputated. Now he couldn't farm very well. His father is a farmer, his brother is a farmer, his sister is a farmer's wife, but he couldn't farm very well, so they set him up in craftsmanship as a cabinet maker, and he made a cabinet for his father's kitchen in a new house built beside the parents' house. As the parents retired they built a house and let the children go into their house. I saw those cabinets, they were as nice as any cabinets I've seen in Columbus, all natural finish with a high grade shellac on them. Beautiful work, the son has learned cabinet work. Now that's not by choice; he'd rather be a farmer. But he lost both legs and he is going to be a cabinet maker for the rest of his life, and he has a little farm, a few acres that he lives on to take care of.

What is their Missionary system? Have you ever heard a rather pungent explanation of this rather difficult statement? They put new wine into old bottles? Now the Amish are trying to put new wine, missionary spirit, into the old bottle of family conducted religion. What does that mean? It means if they are going to have an international system of missions they have to team up with somebody who knows how to run it, and so they have teamed up with the Mennonite Central Committee. That's the nearest to their way of thinking that they can find, and they share in the program of the Friends, not directly, but in spirit. When you put on a heifer program in the United States just after World War II, you found the Amish giving heifers through the Central Mennonite Committee. Hope Mission is operated by the group (if any of you want to see this, this is the voice of Hope from Hope Mission, just one project they have in South Bend, Indiana). But now the Central Mennonite Committee has to give leadership, and they do what you do, they distribute an envelope with gifts as a possibility. This is new to the Amish, they are learning it from the Mennonites. Now the Mennonites are the Pastorate. The Amish withdrew from the Mennonites in order to practice shunning. The Amish believed in Europe that they should not fellowship "unbelievers in the church," or people who differed with them in fundamental interpretations of beliefs, so they withdrew from the Mennonites. Now they are coming back to the Mennonites and saying, "We want to participate in a world mission program." And you can see what that might do to them. So they invited a Mennonite professor from Goshen College to address their national conference last year, and this is what the professor said. His name is John C. Wenger of Goshen College, Indiana. He said, "Three great stumbling blocks that we Mennonites face have torn us asunder. I hope you Old Order Amish can spare that grief. First we had spiritual pride (and I guess he would add, 'false pride'). We thought that we had a monopoly on God's thinking. One of us said, 'We want missions among the Mennonites,' and the other said, 'We don't.' And that tore them apart." Then he said, "We had loss of valuable traditions when we

went into the Mission program. We are throwing out the baby with the bath; by trying so hard to get others to join us, we are willing to part with many traditions in order to get a few new ones to join. And third, we have a loss of unity--a split in the church." Now he said, "If you can avoid that type of experience in the Amish faith as you develop a Mission program, you will have learned from our bitter experience." They invited him to make that speech--the Old Order Amish did. Now I think you can see the same parallel when the Jews tried to convert to the Hebrew religion. When they did, they got Greeks among them, they got Romans among them, they got Egyptians among them. How were they going to make good Jews out of them? They ended up by having a world religion. Now the Amish see this, when they studied from the Mennonites. If you are willing to convince others that you have a superior Gospel, then you must first learn their Gospel, or you will never know whether it is superior. And if you learn their Gospel, you are on the way to a world religion. Now I think that is the fundamental problem that all of us face. I know when John Wesley studied hard to understand American thinking, he built a Methodist church on this continent that was quite different than the Church of England that he was always a member of. I could name twenty different denominations in the United States that have started out on this program of Missions and ended up by here and there saying some of these unique teachings of our beliefs aren't fundamental. We don't have to keep them. As Paul said, "We don't have to make Jews out of all of these converts, we want to make Christians out of them." Therefore he sacrificed the meat taboos of the Hebrews. He sacrificed the Saturday of the Hebrews. He sacrificed, this, that, and the other in saying they are unessential. We want Christians and not Hebrews. He ended up by founding a new church.



### DISCUSSION FOLLOWING THE TALK.

Question. How do the Amish explain the lack of efficiency in the home? Why do they value very efficient methods in farming, and avoid the use of labor-saving equipment in the home?

Reply. You are at the heart of the Patriarchal system, and the Patriarchal system is as much a part of the Amish religion as it was of the Hebrew religion. Can you find any place in the Old Testament that indicates that a woman gets to Heaven by being taken care of and given an easy life? No. Now how does that work out? Well, it isn't as bitter as it sounds, because I don't know anybody that think more of their wives than the Amish men. You can see it when you ride in the car with them, you can see it in their home, you can see it in their church service, but it is a Patriarchal view of woman. That's fundamental, you must understand how a Patriarch looks at the woman. A Patriarch says, "A Woman gets to Heaven by bearing children. She gets to Heaven by being a grandmother, and she isn't worth much 'til she's a grandmother, but by the time she's a grandmother, she's in Heaven, on earth, as it is among the Amish. A girl is strong and vigorous, she's able to be both a mother and a housewife, otherwise she isn't eligible to be a wife. Now, she has the help of her mother at childbirth, she has the help of unmarried sisters. There's a kinship system that will give her the boost when she's at a low ebb physically, but after she's back on her feet and ready to do the housework and the garden and ready to take care of the chickens and help with the milking, when she's back on her feet she asks no odds, she's just as proud of her physical output as anybody. Now after six to ten children are reared, if she has enough vitality to go through that successfully, she's a good Amish wife. That has been in their blood for a thousand years, and they've bred women who can take that, just as definitely as you can find the difference between a racehorse and a drafthorse. Nearly every Amish woman, I don't care how delicate she looks,

has nerves of steel. Now, when she gets to be a grandmother, she's really on "Easy Street." I've been to grandmothers' homes, where they are free to go to Florida, lock up their homes, and the daughter will look after the house as well as her own, and when she comes back, there won't be a speck of dust in that house. She's on "Easy Street" if she rears enough children that are trained right.

Question. I used to work for a farm implement company and all the time I was there, we never sold one tractor to the Amish, but they did use tractors by employing others who owned them. My question is this, if they use a car only in the time of emergency, how do they explain that that is proper? If it is wrong to own a car, how does it come to be right to ride in one that somebody else owns?

Reply. May I get entirely away from the Amish to explain that? We had a Scotsman at the University of Kentucky who knew more about tobacco than any other man in the State of Kentucky, and he was not only a farm reared man, he knew how to process tobacco to get the highest price per pound for the Lucky Strike product. That man never smoked, and someone said to him, "What is your philosophy on tobacco?" He looked the questioner square in the eye and said, "It is made to sell." If you can be that rational in your thinking about a product, you are called an economist, aren't you, and the Scots make good economists for that reason. The Amish will make good economists if you ever give them a college education, because they can separate ideas from things, and that's what it takes. Now, do you want me to go further on the question you asked? ("Yes, please") All right. The telephone is made to use. When? When there is an emergency. Who owns it? It doesn't matter who owns it, it's made to use then. Now, let's take the automobile. I rode to Goshen, Indiana, with an Amishman who had sons married. He wouldn't have thought at all, or hesitated a minute to get a Mennonite to take him up there. He was going on a church mission. Then, I wanted to know why they'd use an automobile to go to Florida, a trip which some would consider a distinct luxury. They never state that they are going on vacation; they are going to visit

relatives, they are going to spend a Winter in Florida and hear one of the best ministers in their national organization. I've seen them visiting Brookfield Zoo in Chicago, but they aren't having a holiday, they are improving their minds.

Question. Do they use the Luther Bible?

Reply. Yes, it's the Luther Bible. They use the same Bible that Martin Luther used after he translated it for the common man.

Question. Do they believe in Baptism?

Reply. Yes, but it is an adult Baptism, not child Baptism.

Question. At what age are they baptized? At what age do they take church membership.

Reply. When one reaches the age of discretion. They are leaving that more and more to the individual, but the parents are doing a lot of thinking with them, and they are now saying that maybe they are entering church membership at too young an age. I talked to one Conservative member, who was reared in the Old Order Amish faith, and he said, "We've made a complete review of this matter of when a child should become a church member and we're convinced we've been taking them in too young. They later go through the confusion of adolescence, and think they aren't saved, and they get all mixed up in their thinking. He said, "We'd rather they went through adolescence before they make their final commitment." This Conservative Amish minister explained to me that their study included questionnaire and interview with many denominational leaders, including Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, and a number of other Protestant denominations.

Question. What methods do they use to persuade their members to remain steadfast in their practices?

Reply. Shunning is the most effective, and it's the one you read about in the paper. They withdraw fellowship, and that's terrible in a real community surrounded only by Amish. When they withdraw fellowship, it's like saying, "You

stay right in this room, but we're not going to speak to you or look at you or hear you." That's a decision of the church, and it differs from one congregation to another, but you'll always find (I think) that when a man is shunned, the trigger action that the newspaper reports is only part of the story. He was already separated in spirit before he came to the crucial decision.

Question. (Regarding ownership of equipment by the Amish.)

Reply. The President of the Christian Day School Board in Plain City community lives second house from Kyle Station. When you go by this farmhouse at night, you'll see his barn lights lit, and you'll see electric lighting in his house. He's farmed that land for sixteen years, he tells me. He has rubber-tired tractors, and he has the latest equipment. Now, if any of the other church members object, all he'll have to say is, "But this is rented equipment." Now, I'd say that just about the same way if he were in this room, but I wouldn't say it with a smile. You see, he says it seriously.

Question. Is there any system of licensing the horses and implements that use the highway?

Reply. Well, there's an equivalent to it in a county in Indiana, La Grange. They have begun licensing the buggies.

Question. Do they have a method of re-payment to those who help in time of need?

Reply. Yes, but it is about the same way you would let your brother help you if your house burnt down. You'd say, "I need it now, but I'm going to help your relatives when they need it." It's an understanding that you never receive more than you give.

Question. (About elections.)

Reply. The general understanding that they tell me is there is no need in participating in a General Election. I inquired about the voting for the wheat

control program, and they did not participate, but they co-operated after the election was held. I say, "What's the difference," and they say that they think for social reasons it's best to co-operate whenever they can, but they don't want to participate in the decision being made by a Government activity, because, they explain, "We don't ask the Government to help us."